

JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

Paul's Model for Ministry

I Thessalonians 2:1-12

Introduction

1. One of my favorite annual events here in Darke County is Prairie Days.
 - It is held at the Shawnee Prairie Preserve and it portrays what life was like for the pioneers who settled in our area.
2. **Pioneers are brave people who “boldly go where no one has gone before!”**
Example: The Apostle Paul travelled throughout the Roman Empire as a pioneer missionary. In I Thessalonians 2 we find:

Paul's Model for Ministry

Part One: The Apostle's Ministry was NOT:

1. In vain. Vs. 1, II Tim. 1:13 - *Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*
 - “**Vain**” means empty, meaningless, without any substance. He shared the life-giving spiritual meat of the Word that produced godliness.
2. Characterized by error or impurity. Vs. 3, Jude 1:11-12 - *Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion. These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted;*
 - He focused his teaching on the truths of God's Word. He did not mix biblical truth with the errors of this world.
3. An effort to deceive. Vs. 3, Mt. 7:15 - *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*
 - There were all sorts of religious con artists offering fake spirituality in his day. **Paul's approach relied upon the Spirit's power, not trickery.**
4. Designed to please people. Vs. 4, Mt. 6:5 - *“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.*
 - **The Apostle's #1 goal was to please his Lord, not people.**

5. With flattery or greed. Vs. 5, Prov. 29:5-6 - *A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. An evil man is ensnared in his transgression, but a righteous man sings and rejoices.*
 - He did not manipulate people for his own benefit.
6. Seeking his own glory. Vs. 6, 1 Cor. 9:19 - *For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.*
 - He considered himself a servant, not a boss.

What about us?

1. Like Paul we must understand God called us to be his tools for life change.
 - **We must rely upon God's Word for the Truth and God's Spirit for the power to convict hearts and transform lives.**
2. Beware of counterfeits! All teaching must conform to the whole counsel of God.
 - **Remember: "All that glitters is not gold."**

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 - For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed--God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.